

Washington, DC- Wednesday, the New Mexico Congressional Delegation announced that New Mexico schools will receive over \$62 million in allocation authority to issue qualified school construction bonds. The bonds, announced today by the US Department of Treasury and Department of Education, are part of an \$11 billion national American Recovery and Reinvestment Act program. Qualified bonds can be used to fund the construction, rehabilitation or repair of a public school facility or for the acquisition of land where a school will be built.

The New Mexico Public Education Department will receive over \$37 million, with Albuquerque Public Schools receiving the remaining \$25 million. The funding amounts are based on a statutory formula tied to levels of federal education grant funding.

“New Mexico schools have received more than \$500 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to both prevent the mass layoffs of teachers and to support academics. Now the law is helping improve the school buildings themselves. I can think of no better investment in our future,” Senator Jeff Bingaman said.

“The greatest investment we can ever make for the future success of our nation is ensuring the education and well-being of our youth,” said Senator Tom Udall. “Because of the Recovery Act, New Mexico has been able to keep teachers employed and in their classrooms. Now, it will allow also us to create jobs at home by providing access to financial capital for new school construction and much needed infrastructure improvements to provide students and teachers with safe and secure learning environments.”

“To provide our kids with the world-class education they deserve we need world-class school buildings,” said Congressman Harry Teague. “Recovery Act funds are not only keeping our teachers in the classroom, but will also bring new jobs to southern New Mexico through construction projects like these. By investing in our education infrastructure now, we can grow our children’s futures while we continue to grow job opportunities here at home.”

“Students are better learners in modern and well-maintained schools,” said Congressman Ben Ray Luján. “I’m encouraged that Recovery Act funding is supporting school construction and modernization, which helps put people to work while preparing young people to succeed.”

“A high-quality education for all of our children is critical to New Mexico’s economic future,” said Congressman Martin Heinrich. “Providing an environment that is safe, inspiring, and conducive to learning is essential to the success of our public schools. These Recovery Act school construction bonds will help modernize schools and create jobs.”

Qualified school construction bonds help state and local governments obtain low-cost financing for much needed public school improvements and construction. Investors who buy these bonds receive Federal income tax credits at prescribed tax credit rates in lieu of interest. These tax credit bonds essentially allow state and local governments to borrow without incurring interest costs.

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